

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

“Crossing the Border: Immigrants in Detention and Victims of Trafficking, Part II”

March 20, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Border, Maritime, and Global Counterterrorism Subcommittee hearing entitled “Crossing the Border: Immigrants in Detention and Victims of Trafficking, Part II”:

“Around the world, between 2 million and 4 million people are trafficked each year. In the U.S. alone, there are an estimated 17,500 victims of trafficking annually. Most of them are women and children, and many have been left vulnerable by war, natural disaster, or poverty.

In addition to being a serious human rights issue, we know that human trafficking poses a threat to our security. Trafficking in persons is a primary funding source for criminals and even terrorists. Also, terrorists are capable of using the same routes used for human trafficking and drug smuggling to enter our country and do us harm.

With the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act due for reauthorization this year, I am especially interested in hearing from our government witnesses about whether they have the resources they need to do their job. If we are serious about fighting terrorism, then we need to get serious about fighting the criminal networks that fund their operations.”

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